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ABSTRACT

A study examined the kinds of skills that minority students felt prepared them for college and helped them to succeed. All 80 minority students enrolled at Illinois' Millikin University (enrollment, 1,800 students) were interviewed for 20 to 30 minutes each. Results indicated that: (1) students reported that English composition/writing classes, advanced mathematics courses, and speech communication/interpersonal courses helped them prepare for college; (2) the most helpful resource on campus was the writing center; (3) the hardest thing about being a Millikin student was the lack of cultural diversity; (4) approximately half of the students said that faculty members were fair and treated minority students the same as anyone else; (5) a strong sense of proving something to the world, a desire to be role models, and family were key motivating factors for the students to stay in college; and (6) the overwhelming response regarding changes the students wanted to see was more diversity on campus. Some of the programs and characteristics of Millikin University that have helped minority students include: the university's small, teaching-oriented status; close monitoring of student progress; a mandatory 8-week orientation course for all freshmen; early intervention programs; minority professionals and staff serving as role models for students; an active Office of Student Development; a writing center that provides transitions in oral and written communication; and the Office of Minority Affairs, which undertakes projects to address the needs and concerns of minority students. (Appendixes present the interview questions, preliminary findings, and time management steps.) (RS)

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BEING A MINORITY STUDENT AT A SMALL PRIVATE UNIVERSITY:

A SURVEY OF CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

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BEING A MINORITY STUDENT AT A SMALL PRIVATE UNIVERSITY: A SURVEY OF CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

Millikin University is committed to enhancing and expanding cultural diversity. As a private university, Millikin has a relatively small number of minority students, 80 out of 1800. To better understand their challenges and reactions, we decided to survey the 80 minority students on Millikin's campus to gain insights into their experiences and to discover what strategies are helping them succeed.

As co-authors discussing our survey results, we shared information about our own background and experiences in higher education. We were intrigued to find that while there are many differences in the life experiences of a white, female, faculty member and an African-American, male, administrator, there are also some striking commonalities. These similarities in goals and skill development have helped us survive and indeed, thrive in higher education. We discovered that our parents had only an 8th grade education, which meant we were first generation college students. For us, making it through college and graduate school meant proving to others and ourselves that we could do it. It meant not letting our families down, wanting them to be proud of our achievements. And it meant struggling to overcome stereotypes about the role of blacks and women in society. The support and encouragement of our academic mentors was critical, since we didn't have family members as role models to advise us, "clue us in," or reassure us.

Finally, we discovered that to be successful in higher education while maintaining our cohesive ties in family circles meant developing a flexible language style. We had to be adept at code-switching, in the broadest use of the term. For one of us, that meant being able to switch almost unconsciously from Standard English to Black English dialect and back again, depending on the demands of the situation. Family members would be put off by the use of Standard English in informal situations and exclaim, "You sound white!" For the other, it meant switching (again almost unconsciously) from correct Standard English

grammar and polysyllabic word use to a simpler vocabulary and deliberate grammar errors that matched the family conversational style. A failure to code-switch meant that "You're putting on airs, sounding like you're better than us." To slip back into the family comfortably means to not stand out, to not intimidate, but create common ground and a sense of identification by "sounding" like the rest of us.

The common background experiences we discovered while working on this project can serve as a microcosm for the larger university community. The skills and attitudes that helped us are the same skills and attitudes students mentioned repeatedly during our survey.

METHODOLOGY

The interviews were conducted by the Minority Student Advisor and an Associate Professor of Communication. We each interviewed 40 of the 80 minority students in our respective offices at Millikin University. In a few cases, due to scheduling problems, we conducted interviews over the telephone. The interviews lasted approximately 20-30 minutes. We took extensive notes during and after the interviews. (For specific interview questions and responses, see Appendix A).

We sought to discover what kinds of skills the students felt prepared them for college and helped them to succeed in college. We also look at how they felt faculty members and other students reacted to them in the classroom (when often there are only 1 or 2 minority students per class). Finally, we explored what changes they would like to see at the university and what motivated them to stay in college when they got discouraged. Let us look briefly at some of the key questions and responses that our interviewees gave.

RESULTS: NECESSARY SKILLS

Students reported that three types of academic classes helped prepare them for college:

1. **English Composition/Writing Classes**
2. **Advanced Mathematics Courses**
3. **Speech Communication/Interpersonal Courses**

It is significant to note that while writing and mathematics are usually seen as important

college preparation classes, that the discipline of Speech Communication ranks third in the students' minds. They felt that public speaking skills improved their self-confidence and ability to present themselves in college courses. They also felt that interpersonal and listening skills helped them to socialize, to make new friends, and to resolve conflicts with roommates. Participation in sports was also cited as a positive experience that taught students responsibility and self-discipline. Finally, note-taking skills were frequently mentioned.

After enrolling at Millikin University, students listed a number of new skills that were either taught or enhanced during their freshman year which helped them succeed in college. The #1 skill that was mentioned repeatedly was **Time Management** taught in our freshman orientation course. Second, they listed library research skills which are taught in a one hour required library research class. Additional skills mentioned were: learning to use computers, English composition/writing skills, study skills, interpersonal communication skills, leadership, being responsible, critical thinking, and mathematical skills.

MOST HELPFUL RESOURCES ON CAMPUS

The # 1 most helpful resource on campus which was mentioned by most of our interviewees was the **WRITING CENTER**. This reflects students' acknowledgement of the importance of good writing for successful achievement in college. It also reflects a recognition among African-American students that they may have difficulties code-switching from Black English dialect to Standard English in their written discourse. Other helpful resources cited were: faculty and administrative offices, the Student Development Office, Computer Labs, the Library, and supportive friends.

HARDEST THING ABOUT BEING A MILLIKIN STUDENT

The # 1 response to this question was the **lack of cultural diversity**. Students commented that it was hard to be black on a white campus, hard to be the only minority in a classroom, hard to deal with racial tensions in residence hall living situations, and hard to develop a social life. Culture shock was frequently mentioned by minorities from large cities (such as Chicago or St. Louis). These students were used to a more diverse high school and were shocked at the attitudes and stereotypes held by students from small, rural towns. One black

male stated, "It is difficult to interact with students from different cultural backgrounds, from small towns. It is frustrating when a while female looks at me like I'm a criminal, is afraid of me, and goes out of her way to walk far around me on the sidewalk," (Student interview, May, 1992).

An oft-mentioned complaint was the limited social life for minorities illustrated by the presence of only one black fraternity. "We have no choice like the white students have" (Student interview, May, 1992). Time management was also specified as a problem. Between competitive classes, part-time jobs, and extra-curricular activities, they felt there was not enough time to do all that was required of them. The silent, sad influence of prejudice was summarized best by one student who said: "I see a glass ceiling. There will always be someone in power over me who is prejudiced - who will not let me succeed. It gives me a sense of fatalism - why try? I may have potential, but their prejudice will always affect me," (Student interview, May, 1992).

FACULTY REACTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Approximately half of our interviewees said that faculty members were fair and treated minority students the same as anyone else. However, the other half of our interviewees held a different view. A major complaint was the feeling that as a minority student, they were singled out during discussions on slavery, affirmative action, stereotyping, the L.A. riots, or any "black" topic. The following comments illustrate this view: "I feel like all eyes are on me to give the "correct answer" to a minority issue question." " I'm singled out to answer questions on a black topic. I know about other topics too. So, why don't they ask me questions on other days?" "They think I speak for all blacks," (Student interviews, May, 1992).

Other students felt that professors either didn't spend enough time on topics related to minorities or weren't being honest in their comments. "If we have an engaging discussion on a minority issue, they don't carry it over to the next class period like other topics. They just drop it. I don't like that. They tiptoe around topics related to minority issues, so as not to offend me," (Student interviews, May, 1992). These comments all suggest that as faculty

members, we may be self-conscious in our classroom discussions of minority issues. Furthermore, we heighten the discomfort a solitary minority student may feel by targeting him or her during a discussion of minority issues.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO STAY IN SCHOOL?

When minority students become discouraged, what motivates them to stay in school. In some ways, the answers are fairly standard. They are motivated by their family, their career goals, their religion and faith in God, their desire for a good job. But other answers are unique. There is a strong sense of trying to prove something to the world. They want to be a positive role models for others (blacks and whites) and hope that by getting a college education they can overcome common stereotypes. There is a strong sense of wanting to prove to others and themselves that they can be successful in college. Family also plays a key role. The deeply motivated students cite a strong family value for higher education, a value that was instilled in them at an early age. University communities might ask how they can help promote the value of higher education in younger children and families.

CHANGES MINORITY STUDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE

The overwhelming response was more diversity on campus. Students wanted to see more black studies courses, more minority students on campus, more minority faculty and staff, and more social activities directed toward minority students. They felt there should be more recruiting from the inner city, rather than the suburbs and rural areas. Finally, they would like to see less racial tension and more cultural acceptance on campus. As one student sighed, "I'd like to not feel that I have to make a choice between my white friends and my black friends," (Student interview, May, 1992). They wanted more conscious-raising workshops/events about other cultures and more unity and networking among all students. Given the above comments made by students that illustrate typical problems, let's look briefly at some of the programs that have helped minorities at Millikin University.

THE ADVANTAGE OF A SMALL TEACHING-ORIENTED UNIVERSITY

Millikin University is a small, private college with 1800 students. The very fact that Millikin is a small school with small classes is an asset for minority students. Teaching-oriented

institutions that emphasize contact with students and careful academic advising can make a crucial difference for many students. Richardson (1989) states "Research universities provide inhospitable environments for all but the best-prepared and most highly motivated students" (p. A48). In a subsequent article he contends, "Personal contact with faculty members in the major has long been recognized as a key factor in academic success" (Richardson, 1990, p. 506). Students who feel comfortable seeking out their professors for help are more likely to persist to graduation. Many students in our survey cited small classes and faculty who were accessible and approachable as one of the primary factors that has helped them to be successful in college.

CLOSE MONITORING OF STUDENT PROGRESS

A critical aspect of good advisement is what Ross (1991) calls an " 'early warning system' that monitors class attendance, submission of assignments, quiz and test scores...." (p.30). We have academic deficiency notices that faculty can file at any time during the semester. On the form, the professor notes that the student is performing at less than "C" level and then specifies problems with missing assignments, tests scores and absences, (See Appendix B). A copy of the form is sent to the student, the registrar, the student's advisor, the retention officer and the Dean. The notice urges the student to see his/her professor for help or to seek help from campus support services such as the Tutoring Service or the Writing Center. This system clearly notifies students and their advisors of their academic progress. It can assist in recognizing minor problems before they become major barriers.

We also have what are known as "FLAG" cards, designed to assist in retention. This is a card sent by professors to the Student Development Office, (See Appendix B). The card contains a 13 category checklist where the professor may indicate a concern about a student ranging from poor performance, to sleeping in class, to a significant change in attitude or behavior. Student Development may then follow up on this concern by talking with the student to see if there is a personal problem and provide counselling or other appropriate assistance.

THE ADVANTAGES OF A MANDATORY EIGHT WEEK ORIENTATION COURSE FOR ALL FRESHMEN

More campuses are extending their orientation programs. At Millikin University, we offer a mandatory 8 week orientation course that meets for 75 minutes/week for the first half of the freshman fall semester. Each session deals with a different topic. Among the most helpful topics mentioned by students in our survey were:

Time Management

Study Skills

Cultural Diversity

Time management was the most frequently mentioned skill. The orientation class leaders (who are faculty or administrators) are assisted by upperclass students who often shares anecdotes from their own lives. Freshmen on our campus often find themselves over-committed simply because it is a small campus with multiple opportunities to get involved in sports, drama, music, Greek organizations, social activities, and student government. They may underestimate the amount of time needed for studying compared to high school and lack the self-discipline needed to set a schedule for each activity and stick to that plan.

One orientation class session focuses on time management. A required exercise asks students to plan out how they will allocate their time for the next week. Then they keep a diary where they record how they actually spent their time for the next 7 days, (See Appendix B). Students are usually surprised at how much time they spend socializing, watching TV, or not following their set study goals. Students in our survey said it was essential that they learn how to set priorities and manage their time effectively to be successful.

Another topic in the orientation class is study skills. During this session, students are made aware of the Writing Center on campus, which not only assists with composition skills, but also offers a series of special workshops on note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking skills. The orientation class offers a small group format where students can weekly share concerns and get advice from fellow students.

Finally, the orientation class focuses on the topic of cultural diversity. A Frontline videotape called "A Class Divided" is shown to all freshmen. In this tape, Jane Elliot divides her class of third graders into blue-eyed and brown-eyed students and treats one group as the superior group and one group as inferior. Ms. Elliot is also shown conducting workshops with adults. The video clearly conveys that any trait could be a dividing factor: black/white, male/female, etcetera. It demonstrates how quickly stereotypes can develop and can hinder academic progress. The video is followed by group discussions intended to sensitize the campus to cultural diversity issues and how they impact the social and academic climate of the campus. Another activity used by some faculty during this session is an exercise where 4 labels are written on the blackboard: Dairy Farmer's Wife President of the PTA Instructor at Mich.St.U. Junior High Football Referee. Students get into 4 small groups and each group is asked to write a description for one of the labels. The description should include, age, gender, marital status, number of children, level of education, type of car, type of clothing, and hobbies. After four different description are put on the board, the professor explains that all four labels describe one and the same person. Students then discuss the origin of stereotypes, expectations and over-generalizations we make based on race or gender or a limited amount of information. The lesson is to check out our first impressions and not prejudge people based on our past experiences or images from the mass media.Millikin also requires freshmen to take a one credit Library Research Course which meets for the first eight weeks of the semester. This courses teaches students how to use a university library, what types of reference materials are available, how to conduct computerized searches, use various periodical indexes,and how to access microfiche materials. Students in our survey commented on the usefulness of this course which enabled them to find supporting materials for term papers and speeches efficiently and effectively.

UTILIZING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT CENTER

In considering student success beyond the undergraduate degree, use of the Career Development and Placement Center is critical. Unfortunately, students tend not to utilize this office until well into their senior year. The Director of Minority Affairs often has students come to him for assistance in resume writing, rather than going to the CD & P Office. More efforts are being taken to encourage students to visit the Placement Center throughout their

college career. The Placement Center can help with finding internships, summer jobs, and preparing students for a job search or graduate school placement. The Placement Center offers assistance in resume writing, videotapes mock interviews, and guides students in preparing applications for graduate school. Many campuses are also offering review courses for the LSAT, MCAT, and GRE. Whether college seniors are entering the job market or applying to graduate or professional schools, they need to be encouraged to visit the Placement Center early and often.

EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

One of our students from Alton, Illinois described a model high school program for college bound students. This unique program matched college bound students with minority students who were already in college and also matched them with 4th - 8th grade students. This tri-level approach seems very useful. College bound high school students were paired with 4th-8th grade students whom they tutored. In turn, the college bound students were themselves tutored and advised by minority students from a local university. Thus, the high school students met with college students who encouraged them, served as role models, told them what to expect and how to prepare for college. Simultaneously, the high school students gained self-esteem by tutoring and encouraging 4th-8th graders. By utilizing this three-tiered approach, the high school students learned both how to tutor and how to accept help or tutoring. They concurrently benefit from having role models and becoming role models for younger students.

Millikin University has established a minority tutoring program where our minority students can assist high school and middle school students with their classes. Richardson (1989) stresses the importance of early intervention programs in the public schools to help students prepare effectively for college.

Finally, summer "bridge" programs are important to get minority college bound students introduced to a college environment (Richardson, 1989). For the last two summers, Millikin faculty have offered a Principal Scholars Program (PSP) for college bound minority youth in the city of Decatur. By taking month long courses in computers, math, and English

Composition, these youths are developing the skills and confidence necessary to succeed in college. They are also becoming acclimated to college professors and the campus environment.

ROLE MODELS

Developing strong leadership skills through programs, workshops and participation in campus organizations are not enough. Minority students need to have contact with minority professionals within the college or university environment. Minority faculty and staff are essential in the overall development of minority students. They can serve as positive role models for all students, especially minority students. Through minority faculty and staff, minority students can see how skills like writing, communication, leadership, time management and others are critical to success. By working directly with minority professionals our students will have a vision of what they can accomplish individually.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT ON SMALL CAMPUSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINORITY STUDENTS

On Millikin University's campus the Office of Student Development plays a very significant role in the social, academic, and vocational development of its minority student population. It is the small size of the university which allows for a close level of attention to be given to each student within the minority population. The Student Development Office at Millikin University consists of the following departments: Minority Affairs and Student Support Services, International Student Services, Student Activities, Residence Life, Career Development and Placement, Greek Life, Student Health Services and the Fitness/Wellness Center. The Student Development Office has developed an in-house network between the Office of Minority Affairs/Student Support Services and the other existing departments. This allows the Office of Minority Affairs to monitor the progress of each minority student more closely. An example of this networking process can be seen in looking at one of the ways the academic progress of minority students can be monitored. Millikin's campus tutoring program is directed by the Minority Affairs Office. This gives the Director of Minority Affairs/Student Support Services the opportunity to expand his networking with university professors and their departments. The Director oversees a staff of forty student tutors who

are selected by the faculty chair of each academic department. This allows the Minority Affairs Director to closely monitor the progress of all students, including minority students who are seeking tutorial assistance. Students needing any special assistance are quickly referred to the appropriate resource. Whenever a student is struggling academically in a specific class or is excessively absent, the professor sends a deficiency notice to the Dean of Student Development. The Dean and/or members of her staff meet individually with the student in order to discuss the situation. The Office of Minority Affairs is informed of the deficiency notice and any action that may be taken. If the Director of Minority Affairs/Student Support Services has established a close rapport with the student, then the situation is handled by the Minority Affairs Office.

TRANSITIONS IN ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Students who seek to be successful in today's world must have competent written and oral communication skills. The minority students who are successful know the importance of such skills and take advantage of the Writing Center. The Writing Center professionals offer individual help in writing, reading, and study skills. Students can receive help in composing and revising essays, research papers, summaries, journals; documenting research papers correctly to avoid plagiarism; test preparation; increasing their reading comprehension; developing efficient time management strategies and more.

However, some minority students may see the enhancement of their communication and writing skills as a threat to their own ethnic or cultural language. This is especially true for many African-Americans. African-Americans who seek to further their education by attending college are sometimes viewed by relatives and peers as talking or sounding white. This can become a huge obstacle for some of our students. However, such an obstacle can be overcome by affirming the dual importance of informal dialect and Standard English and recognizing when to be a flexible code-switcher.

The importance of the African-American culture and heritage must be emphasized in all college and university programs and curriculum. It may appear to African-American students that they are giving up part of their culture when asked to dismiss or set aside words

that are only familiar within certain subgroups of society. Once African-American culture and history become an important part of the educational experience, learning proper oral and written communication skills will not be viewed as some kind of cultural sacrifice.

THE ROLE OF FACULTY IN MOTIVATING AND ENCOURAGING MINORITY STUDENTS

Like all students throughout the U.S., minority students at small private colleges and universities must be motivated to overcome obstacles. College professors can play a key role when it comes to encouraging and motivating minority students, whether the professor is a minority member or not. Minority students, like all students, are definitely motivated by professors who show an interest in the student as a unique individual whose thoughts and/or views are not necessarily representative of the student's ethnic group. This is very important if the student is to have a positive experience in the classroom. Professors should also have high expectations of all their students, especially minority students. Minority students need professors who believe in them and challenge them, rather than lowering standards.

THE IMPACT OF THE MINORITY AFFAIRS POSITION

The Director of Minority Affairs and Student Support Services position at Millikin University was first established in July of 1991. The goals of the position are: to coordinate campus programs and activities in cultural diversity, assist in the recruitment of minority students, assist minority students in the use of programs and services for the success of their academic and personal development, assist the university in implementing a plan that will identify and actively recruit minority faculty and staff appointments, and act as an administrative mediator between minority students and the university, when needed. Even though the director's position has been in existence less than two years, it has had an impact not only upon the Millikin community, but the city of Decatur as well.

Mr. Eric A. Weldy presently serves as Director of Minority Affairs and Student Support Services at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. Mr. Weldy is one of only three minority faculty and/or administrative staff members present on Millikin's campus. Upon his initial arrival he spent the first few months evaluating the racial climate of both the campus

community and the city of Decatur. He also spent time talking with minority students in order to assess their initial needs and concerns, as well as evaluate existing programs on campus geared toward meeting specific needs of the minority student population. Mr. Weldy discovered a new university president who promoted multicultural education and who wanted to establish a diversified campus community which would become a microcosm of society at large. He also found a predominately white campus community that was not particularly eager to change, along with a small minority student population who felt change was long overdue.

After spending the first few months evaluating the campus community, Mr. Weldy came up with following agenda.

1. Educate Millikin faculty, staff and students in the area of multiculturalism in order to foster and promote cultural diversity within the university community.
2. Strengthen support services for the minority student community.
3. Interlock minority students with the rest of the campus community by getting them involved in many of the leadership organizations which exist on campus.
4. Deal with all "hot" issues head-on.
5. Direct minority student organizations to work with other university organizations in order to achieve programmatic goals.
6. Direct minority student organizations in their programming in order to achieve more of a balance between social and educational programming.
7. Work with the administration to develop and implement an action plan to recruit minority students, faculty and staff.
8. Enhance the university's relationship with black and other minority alumni.
9. Direct the university in meeting the intercultural curriculum needs on campus.
10. Encourage minority students to succeed, without lowering individual expectations.

To achieve the necessary directives and/or goals the Office of Minority Affairs undertook the following projects.

1. The Director of Minority Affairs helped to establish a minority student newsletter called **N DA MIX: Strive for Perfection Through the Cultural Connection**. The newsletter was used as an informative educational resource tool for the Minority Affairs Office, minority students, organizations and the Millikin community. A staff of thirteen minority students helped produce the newsletter which was a monthly issue circulated throughout the entire campus community. The newsletter focused on key minority issues, along with allowing students to express themselves through poetry. It educated the community on the differing ethnic cultures, as well as giving the community a first hand look at the individual achievements made by it's minority population. **N DA MIX: Strive for Perfection Through the Cultural Connection** challenged the Millikin community by openly discussing issues dealing with diversity as well as giving minority students a voice on campus.

2. **Millikin University PSP/ACI Summer Enrichment Program**
   The Principal Scholars Program (PSP) was established in order to help enhance educational opportunities and options for minority high school and junior high students. It is a cooperative effort involving funding from the Associated Colleges of Illinois and two local businesses. The funds enable Millikin University to provide an enrichment program for a group of gifted minority high school and junior high students over a four-week period in the summer. The students take classes taught by university professors in the following areas: math, computers, communications/writing, and recreation. Students also take field trips to area businesses. This not only familiarizes them with differing occupations; it also allows them the chance to see successful minority professionals who are good role models. This program gives college bound students the opportunity to obtain/enhance necessary academic skills.

3. A Minority Advisory Committee was established to help Millikin provide a positive learning climate for minority students, as well as providing feedback on topics such as campus programming, student recruitment, staff and faculty recruitment, ways to involve minority students in the community, and ways to improve the university's reputation in the minority community in the city of Decatur. The Director of Minority Affairs serves as chair of the committee which is comprised of four administrative staff, two faculty, two minority alumni and four representatives from the Decatur minority community.

4. A program to diversify the university community was developed by the Director of Minority Affairs and other administrative officials. The program, currently in effect, has a five year implementation period. This diversity plan covers the following areas:

   - formation of a minority advisory committee
   - recruitment of minority faculty and staff
   - minority student recruitment program
   - establishment of a minority summer enrichment program
   - minority CIC faculty staff exchange
   - faculty workshops dealing with diversity issues
   - increased student leadership programs
   - minority faculty fellowships
   - minority scholarships
   - summer faculty workshops
   - minority lectureship

   At the end of the five year implementation period, the diversity program will be evaluated.

5. **Presidential Council on Affirmative Action and Equality**

   The Director of Minority Affairs serves as a council member on the newly formed Presidential Council on Affirmative Action and Equality. The council's mission is to promote and encourage the development of an environment that fosters understanding, acceptance and recognition of the

benefits of individual differences. It is committed to helping establish a prejudice-free community in which individuals are able to pursue their education or employment goals without fear of discrimination or intolerance based on race, color, gender, religion, sexual preference, marital status, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, or culture.

6. Research was done on the part of the Minority Affairs Office to identify Millikin's minority alumni in order to establish and enhance the University's relationship with it's minority alumni. Mailings to minority alumni gives them updated information on Millikin's minority community and the issues and policies which affect the students. Such contact allows Millikin's alumni to once again become a part of the Millikin community by being informed about the programs and activities which benefit the minority student population. The alumni serve as excellent role models for Millikin students and give the students insight into differing occupations.

7. The Director of Minority Affairs assists the admissions staff in minority recruitment efforts. To increase minority recruitment efforts, a minority intern position has been established in the Admissions Office. The intern coordinates the initial contacts with prospective students, organizes campus visits, participates in campus Previews and Honors Day Programs and is responsible for follow-up contacts.

8. A minority tutoring program was established. This program gives minority students on campus the opportunity to serve as role models to high school and middle school students by offering tutoring services free of charge. Tutoring services are offered in math, English and science. Such a program shows Millikin minority students the importance of enhancing their own skills and benefitting others.

The projects and programs mentioned above exemplify the commitment and support Minority Affairs Directors and Advisors need from their college or university to develop a successful

program which will benefit today's minority students and prepare them for a better tomorrow.

Appendix A

Millikin University is a small private, comprehensive university with about 1750 students located in Central Illinois. The campus includes approximately 80 minority students. The paper describes interviews with these minority students. The interviews were conducted by the Minority Student Advisor and an Associate Professor in the Communication Department.

We sought to discover what kinds of skills the students felt prepared them for college and helped them to succeed in college. We also looked at how they felt faculty members and other students reacted to them in the classroom (when often there are only 1 or 2 minority students per class). Finally, we explored what changes they would like to see at the university and what changes they would like to see at the university and when they got discouraged what motivated them to stay in college.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS INCLUDED:

1. What courses, campus activities, or other types of involvement in high school helped prepare you for college?

2. What added skills have you developed since your arrival at Millikin University?

3. What was your open reaction to Millikin during your first weeks on campus? Is Millikin what you expected it to be?

4. Name the hardest thing about being a student at Millikin.

5. What resources on campus have helped you to be successful at the university?

6. Are there any particular changes you would like to see on campus?

7. Why did you choose Millikin over other colleges and universities? Are you happy with your choice?

8. How do faculty members react to you in the classroom?

9. If you ever felt discouraged and felt like dropping out, what motivated you to stay in school?

10. Are there any additional things the office of the Minority Student Advisor could be doing for you?

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS:

SKILLS/EXPERIENCES THAT PREPARED YOU FOR COLLEGE

English composition classes and writing skills
Advanced math courses
Speech communication
Being in sports--taught me responsibility and discipline
Note taking skills
Advanced science courses
Advanced and/or college prep courses
Interaction with others in clubs and organizations helped to develop leadership and communication skills
A high school club where we simultaneously tutored 4th-8th graders and were role models for them, while minority students at the local university tutored us and served as role models for us. They told us what to expect at college.

SKILLS DEVELOPED AT COLLEGE THAT MAKE YOU SUCCESSFUL

Time management taught through the orientation class
Library Research Skills
Learning to use computers
English composition and writing skills
Study Skills
Interpersonal Communication Skills
Being assertive
How to relate more to others and communicate
Gaining responsibility, leadership, and independence
Critical thinking
Math skills
Organizational skills

HARDEST THING ABOUT BEING A MILLIKIN STUDENT

Being black on a white campus
Lack of diversity and social life for minorities
Being the only minority in a class
Finding time to do all that is required of me
Dealing with the attitudes of others
Stress of academically challenging courses
Time management
Only one black fraternity, no choice like the white students have
Culture shock--used to a more diverse high school
Interacting with people of different culture backgrounds, people from small towns
Stereotypes
Racial tensions in dorm living situations

Competitiveness within the classroom
When a white female looks at me like I'm a criminal and is afraid of me, goes way around me on the sidewalk.
Black athletes who are recruited are better than the coaches think. Black athletes are not totally accepted, not get enough play time in the games.
I see a glass ceiling. There will always be someone in power over me who is prejudiced--who will not let me succeed. It gives me a sense of fatalism--why try? I may have potential but their prejudice will always affect me.

MOST HELPFUL RESOURCES ON CAMPUS

Writing Center
Faculty and Administrative Offices
Student Development
Computer Labs
Library
Supportive Friends

CHANGES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

More diversity--more minority students and minority faculty members
I'd like to not feel like I have to make a choice between my white friends and my black friends
More African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Native-Americans
More cultural diversity overall
Hiring of minority faculty
Unity among the minority population
Less racial tension and students being more open-minded about other cultures
More recruiting from the inner city
A black history class/more black curriculum
More social activities for black students/minorities
Housing rules and/or decisions need to be more flexible

HOW FACULTY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS REACT TO YOU IN THE CLASSROOM

Tiptoe around topics related to minority issues, so as not to offend me.
Feel like all eyes are on me to give the "correct answer" to a minority issue question
Avoid the real minority issues
Treat me like the other students, no difference
If we have an engaging discussion on a minority issue, they don't carry it over to the next class period like other topics. They just drop it. I don't like that.
I'm singled out to answer questions on a black topic. I know about other topics too, so why don't they ask me other questions?
They think I speak for all blacks.

Positive and fair
The same as anyone else

IF YOU FELT DISCOURAGED AND WANTED TO DROP OUT, WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO STAY IN SCHOOL?

God
My family
Determination
Want to be a positive role model for my family, for blacks and whites
Wanted to prove to others and myself that I can do this.

Want to get a good job--need a college degree or beyond to do that
To overcome stereotypes

SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT THE MINORITY STUDENT ADVISOR'S OFFICE CAN DO

Have a rap session once a month
Have an organization for all minority students, not just the blacks (like BEA)
More cultures represented in the newsletter
Need more unity and networking among the students.
More information about minority student scholarships for all types of minorities
Emphasize conscious-raising about different cultures for other students
More black professional speakers on campus to prove one race isn't superior
Create more unity--find common ground

Appendix B

TIME MANAGEMENT STEPS

Following the steps below will start helping you get control of not only your time, but of your life. Frequent use will help make time management a habit you can carry for the rest of your life. Taking a few minutes each day to plan out your activities will allow for more effective use of your time. Remember, FAILING TO PLAN USUALLY MEANS PLANNING TO FAIL!!

Step 1: Mark off on your calendar all times that are predictable for you.

Step 2: Make your own personal assessment of your discretionary time and determine what times you would like to do tasks.

Step 3: Make an assessment of your goals and revise them if necessary.

Step 4: Make a daily to-do list prioritizing your tasks and listing out any sub-tasks you may need to do.

Step 5: Schedule times to accomplish the tasks on your to-do list.

Step 6: Repeat steps 4 & 5 daily! Revise your lists of goals and your personal assessments weekly.

Step 7: Be **FLEXIBLE** and willing to change your schedule when necessary.

Questions for personal assessment:

1) At what time of the day do I feel I can concentrate the best?
2) What time do I usually get up and go to bed?
3) When do I feel most like exercising?
4) When do I most often like to socialize?
5) The most frequent reasons I give for not accomplishing a task is . . . ?
6) I am the type of person who when asked by a friend to go some place with her/him while I am studying will usually . . . ?
7) When I have free time, I most often spend it in the following ways . . . ?
8) The most successful experience I have had studying has been . . . ?
9) I seem to have the most free time when . . . ?
10) I enjoy studying most in the . . . ?

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